United Nations A/AC.198/1999/2

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 April 1999

Original: English

Committee on Information
Twenty-first session
3–14 May 1999
Substantive questions

Reorientation of United Nations activities in the field of public information and communications

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 53/59 B of 3 December 1998, the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General "to develop further his proposals for the reorientation of United Nations activities in the area of public information and communications, taking into account the views of Member States" and further requested him "to submit his detailed plan thereon to the Committee on Information for consideration at its twenty-first session in 1999".

2. The General Assembly further emphasized that, "through its reorientation, the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of specific interest to the developing countries and others with special needs, including countries in transition, and that such reorientation should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of information and communications".

3. In considering these matters, the Committee on Information should take into account all the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the measures regarding information and communications (A/AC.198/1998/2) and the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information (A/53/509). Both reports taken together provide a substantial portion of the information requested by the General Assembly. In the present report, therefore, repetition of the information provided in the above-mentioned reports has been kept to a minimum and emphasis is placed on the new measures that have been adopted to further develop the conceptual framework that had been presented to the Committee at its twentieth session. Furthermore, the present report should be read along with the other reports on specific aspects of the Department's work being submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its twenty-first session.

II. New orientation

4. The main elements of the new orientation of the activities of the Department of Public Information were summarized in paragraph 5 of the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information (A/53/509). The main thrust of reorientation measures is focused on the Organization's response to the imperatives of what is described as the "age of information". The Secretary-General has best described the genesis of a response to this imperative as the need for a "culture of communications" to permeate the United Nations. Every effort has to be made, therefore, to ensure that all parts of

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the Organization come to recognize public information and communications as an integral part of their substantive programmes, a view that was strongly endorsed in the report of the Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities (A/AC.198/1997/CRP.1). Indeed, in the light of discussions on these issues over the past two years, it is the widely shared view of Member States and of the Secretary-General that the information and communications function should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the Organization.

5. The measures that have been adopted to reorient the activities of the Department of Public Information would seek to project the Organization as an open, transparent and public institution capable of meeting the principal objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, economic and social development and human rights, among others. This would entail the introduction and employment of the latest developments in the field of information technology to ensure that, despite the limited resource base, output and productivity are improved continuously to meet increasing demand from all parts of the world. In order for the United Nations to more effectively reach audiences around the globe, the capacity to communicate at the country and regional levels has to be enhanced progressively. The messages disseminated must be in accordance with the mandates given by relevant intergovernmental bodies, while taking into account regional and local needs.

6. The measures required for reorientation of the public information and communications policies and activities of the Department have consequences for both its structure and its methods of work. In addition to the structural changes made thus far, the present report will indicate where the reorientation is being achieved through greater emphasis on optimum use of available resources and on cooperative efforts with the substantive departments of the Secretariat.

III. New technology

7. The introduction of new technology in the field of communications is often taken to mean increasing the capacity to use the Internet. This rendering does not, however, provide a full picture of the impact of new technology on communications and public information in general and the work of the Department of Public Information in particular. The dramatic developments in information technology throughout this century have shown how new media have both revolutionized the dissemination of information at various junctures and opened ever widening horizons to new and increasing audiences while, at the same time, strengthening the role of the already established media. Just as radio and television joined the print medium in widening their reach to newer and larger audiences, the advent of the Internet has introduced a fourth medium that is rapidly evolving into a significant communications tool for users around the world.

8. The Department of Public Information has to approach the issues that arise in this context with a view to ensuring progress on a broad front. While taking all necessary measures to stay abreast of the latest developments in the use of the Internet as a medium for public information, care has to be taken to maintain and expand the Department's capacity to use the "traditional" media for dissemination of information, especially in developing countries where access to the Internet is only at its initial stages.

9. To strengthen the Department's capacity to manage and coordinate the United Nations website and to underscore the importance that the Department attaches to its role, the Information Technology Section, which manages the Internet operation, has been placed in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information under the overall supervision of a staff member at the D-1 level and the policy direction of the Under-Secretary-General. In addition to its responsibilities regarding the United Nations website, the Department also coordinates and chairs the interdepartmental group on Internet matters, and thereby continues to enhance its assistance on Internet matters rendered to other parts of the Secretariat.

10. The unique power of the Internet has been harnessed by the Department to expand the reach of its information products and portray the wide range of activities of the Organization. The United Nations website today carries a great variety of material, including statements by the Secretary-General, reports to major intergovernmental bodies, daily news highlights, promotional products on the major themes and priorities of the Organization, information regarding major world conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly, to name a few. Taking advantage of the synergistic aspects of the Internet, the website also carries radio broadcasts and video footage developed by the Department.

11. A very significant recent development has been the introduction, despite severe resource constraints, of the web pages in all six official languages. The Department's objective is to bring all the web pages on a comparable footing in due course, as resources permit. Future plans also include continuous addition of audio and video elements, a larger volume of older documents and a continuing

improvement in the presentation and design of the various parts of the United Nations website. A more detailed description of the latter aspect is provided in the report of the Secretary-General on continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations websites (A/AC.198/1999/6).

IV. Reaching the media

12. A more effective news gathering and delivery system, which the Secretary-General identified last year in his reorientation plan as one of the most immediate priorities of the Department of Public Information, is entering into operation. Such a news operation can help to meet the increased demand for information by new media organizations, which are proliferating at a great pace worldwide and seeking sources of interesting materials related to all the principal priorities of the Organization. To strengthen the current news operation, therefore, the Editorial Section has been moved to the Media Division, which has been renamed the News and Media Services Division as an indication of the Department's sharpened news focus.

13. The Department's immediate priority is the development of the United Nations News Service. With the assistance of the United Nations information centres, services and other field offices, the information available through this Service will be transmitted via electronic mail and facsimile directly to the news desks of key media organizations around the world, as well as to other important opinion-making constituencies. The centrepiece of the Service will be a brief "Headline News Alert" on breaking news from the United Nations, which will also be posted on the United Nations website on the Internet. Only headlines will be included, with indications as to where further details can be obtained from press releases, statements and other material posted on the United Nations website. The United Nations News Service will also contain an expanded news feature service. Earlier in 1999, the Department also began the placement, on a worldwide basis, of carefully planned and coordinated op-ed articles by senior United Nations officials. Finally, with the technology now in place, United Nations officials will be able to brief senior journalists via telephone at the national or subregional level on issues of pressing concern to them. This multifaceted news operation will therefore bring the United Nations right to news desks in otherwise distant countries. At the same time, it will provide journalists worldwide with a central communication point in the Department of Public Information. While media organizations in all countries will find these services useful, those news organizations that do not have their own correspondents at United Nations Headquarters will particularly benefit.

14. Another priority for the Department is the development of a daily news page on the United Nations website, building on the proven success of the daily highlights. When fully operational, the page will provide the media and others interested in the United Nations with a summary of breaking news on all the major events and activities of the day. It will also provide information on upcoming meetings and events. News headlines will be linked to full-length articles, press releases, documents, high-quality photographs, United Nations radio and video features and other source material available system-wide, and will provide direct links to other major news sites, such as the daily press briefing of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General.

15. The Department's press releases containing comprehensive, immediate information, in both English and French, on the proceedings of United Nations intergovernmental meetings, the activities of the Secretary-General, the work of the Organization's substantive departments and of other organizations of the United Nations system — until recently available only to a relatively restricted group of Headquarters-based journalists, delegations and Secretariat officials, and by diplomatic pouch to others away from Headquarters — are now disseminated worldwide, almost instantly, on the Internet. In the near future, topic-oriented press releases, daily highlights and other news-related materials will be sent by electronic mail directly to the newsrooms of journalists who express interest in receiving these materials.

V. Radio and television

16. The recommendation of the Secretary-General's Task Force calling for the modernization of the United Nations radio and television services came as a welcome impetus to the Department's development plans in this field. Efforts are therefore now under way to increase the provision of live feeds and other easy-to-assemble raw materials that can be quickly disseminated worldwide and that are more easily adaptable for use by the mass media. Progress in this area will help to bridge the existing information gap between the developed and the developing countries in this field, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/38 B of 9 December 1994.

17. Priority is being given, therefore, to establishing links with radio stations worldwide, which will enable instantaneous use of the Department's radio programmes, through the most effective delivery system available in each region or subregion, including short wave, satellite, digital audio, telephone feeds, electronic audio-file transfer and other Internet-based mechanisms. An important breakthrough in this regard is the delivery of Chinese language programmes to major broadcasting stations in China, as well as in the United States of America, by electronic audio transfer. In addition, the Internet is being used for direct broadcast of United Nations programmes for regions where multimedia Internet use is available, through the Organization's first-ever audio-visual website, established in 1999. Efforts are also under way to deploy technology that will enable broadcasters to use programmes posted on this website. Finally, other important developments in this reporting period are the creation of the Organization's first audio-visual web page, and the posting of brief audio news clips on the United Nations Radio web page for immediate use by broadcasters. The net result of all these developments will be that United Nations outputs will have greater immediacy and resonance for broadcasters, making their use much more likely. As headway is made in speedy and timely dissemination of radio materials directly to broadcasters, a concomitant drop will take place in tape programme production.

18. Priority is also being given to the development of the news content of programme production. To this end, the production staff has taken part in professional training programmes featuring hands-on applications and refresher courses conducted by trainers from world-renowned broadcasting organizations. In addition, the Department has strengthened its cooperation with the programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations system for the generation of more diverse radio programme material. It is also working on setting up a network of field stringers, in cooperation with the network of United Nations information centres, to expand the spectrum of coverage and enrich programme content.

19. Similar changes are also under way in the visual area. The Department is closely following technical innovations available on the Internet that could enhance the use of television and video clips on the United Nations website. In addition, the Department has begun working closely with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and other substantive departments of the Secretariat to prepare raw visual materials for dissemination in connection with important upcoming meetings or events, as a means of generating greater mass media coverage for the Organization's views and concerns. Photographs of the Secretary-General travelling on important missions are now digitally transmitted worldwide, and arrangements are made with international broadcasters to offer television footage globally. The daily briefing by the Spokesman for the Secretary-General is already available in video format. Finished video products, such as "UN in Action", which continues to be seen by millions of viewers through cooperative arrangements with the Cable News Network International and national broadcasters, "World Chronicle" and other video material, such as conference and meeting coverage, are also envisaged for posting as streaming video or digital files on the Internet as the cost and availability of this technology make it more viable.

20. The Department is planning for the change to digital television technology, which will completely replace analogue technology in the United States during the first decade of the new millennium. Appropriate equipment is being purchased and technical facilities are being upgraded to ensure that United Nations Television can function fully in this new technological environment.

21. The consolidation, in September 1998, of audio-visual promotion and dissemination will play a major role in ensuring a coherent technological approach to the Internet and the new media, especially as the convergence of these media gathers pace internationally. Audio-photo-video libraries are now jointly managed within the Multimedia Assets, Promotion and Distribution Unit. The Unit's multimedia technological expertise will facilitate the timely distribution of United Nations photographic, radio and television products and support the Division's newly established News Services and Editorial Section in the production of the United Nations News Service page of the United Nations website. As a result of skills upgrading in the field of electronic media file transfer, radio news updates in Chinese, English, French and Spanish are now posted, transmitted and downloaded through the Internet. Audio posting in other languages will follow soon.

VI. Information programmes

22. The arrival of the "age of information" has been embraced by commercial and business sectors in industrialized countries and also by the growing economies of developing countries. Governments have also taken far-reaching measures to stay abreast of the new developments. Therefore, international organizations must seek not only to absorb new information technologies but also, where

appropriate, to play a role in drawing international attention to global issues that might arise in this context.

23. The role of the Department of Public Information in developing information and communications strategies for the thematic priorities established by the General Assembly and the continuing series of global conferences is well established and recognized both within the Secretariat and among Member States. In the context of the reorientation of the information and communications activities of the Department, the strengthening of the existing close working relationship with the thematic departments has become a key priority. In each programme area, working arrangements have been developed to suit the specific needs of the thematic department concerned.

24. In the area of peace and security, an important challenge has been the introduction of information and communications priorities as part of the core activities of the Organization in the field. In addition to the need to underscore, for all concerned, the key role that the quality of public information and communications activities plays in the effectiveness and success of peacekeeping operations in the field, the Department has developed cooperative mechanisms, enabling it to provide the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other concerned departments with all the programmatic support necessary to undertake appropriate information programmes. It is through such a process that the Department of Public Information, together with other departments concerned, now provides a responsibility centre for public information and communications activities in field operations. Through careful study and review of experience in peacekeeping operations, appropriate guidelines and manuals have been developed. The need to include information-related requirements in the earliest planning stages of field operations has been consistently emphasized.

25. A recent example of such cooperation has been the establishment of mobile FM and short-wave broadcasting facilities for use by the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic. Such a facility adds very substantially to the capacity of a peacekeeping mission to address audiences locally, in order to promote a clear understanding of the mandate and generate support for the United Nations presence and activities in the country concerned. These facilities have been made possible by the generous support of the Government of Denmark and, being mobile, can be used again in future missions, as appropriate.

26. Close working relations with the thematic departments have yielded very encouraging results both at Headquarters and in the field. The year 1998 marked the fiftieth anniversary of both United Nations peacekeeping and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Department of Public Information worked closely with the thematic departments and offices to ensure that both anniversaries were observed with the support of information activities, including effective and very informative exhibits, a number of publicity events organized in partnership with non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, press kits, posters and others.

27. Looking to the future, working arrangements with departments active in the economic and social fields have been reinforced through a process of consultation at the level of the heads of department. A series of major global conferences on economic and social issues are already on the calendar for the coming years. For instance, the Department is working closely with the United Nations Population Fund to ensure the maximum possible publicity for the five-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994). Together with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department is developing information strategies for similar reviews of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and others. The task of reorienting the Department's work in these areas has not involved structural changes as much as reinforcement of cooperative activities to achieve more effective outreach and advocacy.

28. The effect of new technologies in the thematic areas has been particularly noticeable in the improvement in the capacity to produce better-quality information products more expeditiously, and in the effort to design information products in such a way that they can be issued in hard copy and on the Internet simultaneously. All the information products for the forthcoming global conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly, as well as for other activities, such as the ongoing International Year of Older Persons, are being disseminated in this manner.

29. The United Nations focus on development activities has received renewed impetus from the Economic and Social Council through the convening of high-level meetings that include participation by the representatives of Bretton Woods institutions. The Department has worked closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to ensure that the deliberations in such meetings secure the widest possible coverage by the media. In addition, through its development publication *Development Update*, the Department continues to improve the coverage of key issues on the United Nations agenda in the economic and social fields. Renewed emphasis on the quality of information

products on development issues is a central feature of the new orientation.

30. Issues of gender equality continue to receive special emphasis in the Department's media strategies. Whether the activities concern crime prevention and criminal justice, drug abuse, youth, disabled persons, human rights, indigenous people, eradication of poverty, environment and development, or peace and security, gender issues are always factored into the Department's media strategies.

VII. Partnerships

31. The role of civil society in the redissemination of the message of the United Nations and as the Department's partner in this endeavour has taken on growing significance. Foremost are, of course, the partnerships with the media. Reinforcement of the Department's close working relations with the corps of resident correspondents at the United Nations, convening of annual television forums for the leadership of that medium, assistance to large media organizations, such as Cable News Network, and outreach to media editorial boards, among others, are all examples of a more dynamic and proactive approach to this important partner.

32. Non-governmental organizations continue to seek association with the Department of Public Information in large numbers. The annual conferences, weekly briefings, and a variety of joint activities are all part of the reinforcement of the services provided to non-governmental organizations. The number of non-governmental organizations associated with the Department of Public Information is now close to 1,600.

33. Key redisseminators for future generations are, of course, educational institutions and the Department has continued to expand its outreach to them. Workshops for teachers, "Students' days at the United Nations", students' conferences on various United Nations themes, teleconferences reaching some 5,000 schools throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States, improved guided tours and group programmes and user-friendly publications targeted at students are all examples of these proactive activities.

34. The United Nations is also fostering a stronger relationship with the business community. To that end, the Department is working closely with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to help foster this new relationship and shape the messages delivered to this important segment of civil society. Businesses can relate to the United Nations as participants in global and regional policy-making forums and projects, as users of statistics and technical studies, as vendors of equipment and expertise and as beneficiaries of the international standards and agreements that make possible cross-border trade, investment, communication and transportation. As part of the Department's effort to reach out to the private sector, a new website www.un.org/partners, was launched in January 1999. This new virtual enterprise liaison service helps corporations to locate the United Nations services that they require. It is notable that, within 36 hours of its launch, the business part of this website had 10,000 accesses.

35. The Media Response Group continues to monitor media coverage of the United Nations and advise the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information on appropriate and timely responses to misinformation or criticism of the United Nations in the media. The fact sheet series "Setting the record straight" continues to be updated and new fact sheets are issued as required.

VIII. Publications

36. Publications constitute a key aspect of the Department's outreach effort. The Department is engaged in the revitalization of its programme to ensure the production of outputs that are demand-driven and that demonstrate effectively the relevance and centrality of the work of the entire United Nations family to people throughout the world.

37. The Department continues to respond to the valuable data generated by the 1997 readership survey and other feedback in order to enhance the effectiveness and marketability of its publications. The ongoing revitalization of the *UN Chronicle* continues to build on the promotion of thematic mandates, development of partnerships with information disseminators and, above all, the projection of the central role being played by the United Nations to meet the growing challenges before it.

38. The new edition of *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, the Department's premier sales publication, already reflects a number of improvements suggested by the findings of the 1997 readership survey. A more in-depth evaluation of this key reference publication, including through the use of focus groups, is being undertaken among the principal target audiences to ensure its continuing relevance to users and to further assess its commercial possibilities.

39. While the Department retains its primary focus on the production of print publications, effective utilization of the

electronic media is now vital to the goal of broadening the Department's outreach capability. The Department is taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the electronic medium to offer material and search capabilities not possible in hard-copy versions, including more timely updating of information. The new medium also permits direct interaction with the users and redissemination of the Department's information, providing further means of ensuring the continued relevance of its outputs.

40. The *Yearbook of the United Nations* has successfully completed the incorporation of modern technology in its production process, making it possible to improve the timeliness of the production of future volumes and to make them available on a regular basis. The elimination of the backlog will enable the Department to launch a revenue-producing CD-ROM project incorporating the first 50 volumes of the *Yearbook*, from 1946 through 1996.

41. New websites for *UN Chronicle* and the newsletter *Africa Recovery* are eliciting keen interest and are being further developed. Electronic publication is central to dissemination of the highly time-sensitive periodical, *Development Business*, which provides its subscribers with information on procurement opportunities from the regional development banks, the World Bank and other parts of the United Nations system. *Development Business*, in cooperation with the World Bank, has developed a website version of the publication and plans to offer other on-line services to its growing subscriber base.

IX. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

42. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library will continue to move in the direction of a virtual library with a worldwide outreach. While it will not neglect the traditional media for its local users, its services will become increasingly global in nature, and, for effective outreach to a global audience, increasingly electronic and multilingual.

43. To reach its goal of becoming virtual library to the world, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library will be expanding its activities in a number of directions:

(a) Internet: continuously enriching the Library page on the United Nations website, providing guidance in the use of United Nations information, particularly its documentation, to audiences worldwide. The Library's major databases, the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS), will also be using the Internet. The page will be developed to the maximum extent in all six official languages, complemented by a six-language thesaurus for effective information retrieval;

(b) Making available the full text of United Nations documents available on the optical disk system/Internet through its programme of digitizing documents retrospectively in all official languages;

(c) United Nations depository libraries, well over 350 in number, will be further developed into effective channels of communication with civil society throughout the world. Regular two-way electronic communication will grow to permit speedy dissemination of information and regular feedback from the target audiences. Electronic delivery of United Nations documents to depository libraries, where feasible, will be promoted to ensure rapid, complete and cost-effective documents distribution;

(d) Access to non-United Nations electronic information, increasingly cost-effective through the collective purchasing power of the organizations of the United Nations system, will be expanded and will include databases from worldwide sources in all official languages. This information will be disseminated to all United Nations offices, United Nations information centres and permanent missions, as well as to ordinary citizens on a global scale.

X. Structural changes

1. Communications Group

44. The Secretary-General has appointed a Director of Communications in his Office to assist in developing an overall communications strategy for the Organization and to coordinate efforts to ensure coherence and clarity in the delivery of United Nations messages. To this end, the Director of Communications convenes weekly meetings of the Communications Group composed of representatives of the various parts of the Secretariat engaged in communications functions. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information also participates in the Communications Group.

2. Strategic Communications Planning Group

45. Apart from the redeployment of resources from the Library and Publications Division to the News and Media Services Division to establish a writers' group and to substantially improve output for the media, the Department

has taken important steps to improve its strategic planning capacity. Accordingly, a strategic communications planning group, which includes all directors and service chiefs under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, has been established to study relevant developments and outline information strategies for the Department.

XI. Information activities in the field

46. A central tenet of the public information goals of the United Nations is that its message must reach all peoples of the world. Therefore, an important aspect of the reorientation of public information activities is to put into practice the idea of "a global vision, local voice" by increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations information centres and services located around the world.

47. In order to take full advantage of the potential of new information technologies, the Department of Public Information will continue its major effort to provide forward-looking training to the staff in information centres in computer-related functions, such as electronic information retrieval and dissemination, the Internet and web page design.

48. Currently, all but a few information centres are connected to electronic mail, and most have access to the Internet. Sixteen information centres already have their own web pages in local languages, dramatically increasing their outreach. Library services have improved with electronic reference tools, such as UNBIS, CD-ROM and access to the optical disk system and other electronic information resources of the United Nations system. The benefits are immediate and concrete: more up-to-date information, faster response to constituents, wider information outreach and increased potential for closer cooperation among United Nations information centres, such as sharing of local-language translation. In addition, the ability of Headquarters to provide quick guidance and other services to United Nations information centres is enhanced. An augmentation of both the quality and quantity of services provided by information centres is the result.

49. Currently, about 90 per cent of the accesses to the United Nations website come from developed countries. Therefore, the information work carried out by the United Nations information centres cannot be conveniently entrusted to computers; the centres will continue to rely on personal contacts, traditional media and outreach to the community.

50. Partnerships with entities in the local community, such as non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, local government offices, media and business, have become the mainstay of outreach activity by the United Nations information centres. As part of the reorientation, such cooperation is encouraged and supported by Headquarters, since it is only through active involvement with institutions closely tied to the community that the United Nations message can be placed into a local context.

51. As a result of the decrease over the years in the number of professional posts in the field, about half of the information centres are currently headed by staff members of the Department, while the rest are headed by United Nations resident coordinators. A continuing challenge for the Department is to achieve the most effective utilization of the limited human resources available for all the field offices.

52. With this in mind, the Department will undertake a two-pronged effort. On the one hand, it will strengthen information centres headed by staff members of the Department, in order to enable them to provide other information centres in the region with support by way of training, local-language United Nations information materials, media services and general information and communications support. At the same time, the Department must constructively address, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the problems that have been identified in some of the information centres headed by resident coordinators. Various aspects of this issue are discussed in greater detail in the report of the Secretary-General on integration of United Nations information centres with field offices of UNDP (A/AC.198/1999/3).

United Nations A/AC.198/1999/3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 April 1999

Original: English

Committee on Information
Twenty-first session
3–14 May 1999
Substantive questions

Integration of United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In 1992, an initiative was launched to integrate, wherever feasible, operations of certain United Nations information centres with field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The main objectives were the following:

(a) To present a unified image of the United Nations in the field;

(b) To enhance information activities in all areas of the Organization's work, including development issues;

(c) To achieve economies of scale through the sharing of common services;

(d) To facilitate inter-agency coordination and avoid duplication.

2. At the request of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a report in 1993 entitled "Integration of United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, while maintaining the functional autonomy of the United Nations information centres" (A/AC.198/1993/7). Having considered that report, the Assembly subsequently requested the Secretary-General to continue the integration exercise in a cost-effective manner and, whenever feasible, on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the views of the host Government. Furthermore, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the information functions and the autonomy of United Nations information centres were not adversely affected by the integration exercise. Those principles have been reiterated by the Committee on Information and the General Assembly, most recently in resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997 and 53/59 B of 3 December 1998. In the latter resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee at its twenty-first session on the status of the integration exercise.

3. As requested by the General Assembly, the present report provides an overview of the status of the integration exercise since the last report on this subject was prepared for consideration by the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session in 1997 (A/AC.198/1997/5).

II. Background

4. At the inception of the integration exercise in April 1992, discussions were held among representatives of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Department of Public Information, UNDP, the Department of Administration and Management, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office of Human Resources Management and

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the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance. It was agreed that the 1990 Agreement between UNDP and the Department of Public Information on cooperation in the field would form the basis on which to build further cooperation.

5. It was also agreed that information centres that were integrated would continue to maintain their functional autonomy, with UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators who serve as centre directors reporting to the Department of Public Information on all aspects of the work, administration, budget and staffing of such information centres, all of which would remain independent of the UNDP office concerned. Furthermore, while the sharing of resources was encouraged, the accounts and equipment of the information centres and of UNDP field offices in the same location would be clearly segregated for financial reporting and control purposes.

6. In August 1992, letters jointly signed by the Department of Public Information and UNDP were sent to the following 18 information centres outlining policies and guidelines for the integrated operation: Algiers, Ankara, Antananarivo, Asunción, Bucharest, Cairo, Colombo, Kabul, Kathmandu, Kinshasa, La Paz, Lomé, Managua, Maseru, Monrovia, Panama City, San Salvador and Yangon. Of those, the information centres in Kabul, Monrovia and San Salvador remain temporarily closed. An additional 16 information centres are currently operating under the direction of the UNDP Resident Representative/United Nations Resident Coordinator as Acting Director, without having been formally integrated. These are in Bogota, Brazzaville, Bujumbura, Dakar, Dhaka, Dar es Salaam, Khartoum, Lima, Lusaka, Manama, Manila, Rabat, Tripoli, Warsaw, Windhoek and Yaoundé. In addition, the Department of Public Information has information components that serve under the direction of the UNDP Resident Representatives/United Nations Resident Coordinators in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Eritrea, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

III. Status of the integration exercise

A. Enhancing information activities

7. Ongoing evaluations of the United Nations information centres by the Department of Public Information has shown that, while the objectives of the integration exercise remain as valid today as they were in 1992, problems have been encountered in implementation. In 1997, the Secretary-General's Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities recognized that the experience of integrating information centres with United Nations offices under a resident coordinator had "not been uniformly productive" (see A/AC.198/1997/CRP.1, para. 131; see also paras. 67–68).

8. In assessing the activities of the global network of information centres, the Department of Public Information has found that, in general, the integrated information centres have a lower level of programme delivery and a narrower range of activities than those which have not been integrated. Interaction with the Department of Public Information at Headquarters and the frequency of reporting on activities is also often weaker.

9. Part of the difficulties faced by integrated information centres (as well as those not integrated) is the diminished availability of resources. For instance, since the outset of the integration exercise in 1992, local-level posts have been reduced by some 40 per cent, and four new information centres were established from within existing resources (Bonn, Pretoria, Sana'a and Warsaw).

10. Other problems are related to a lack of familiarity on the part of some UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators with the mandate of the Department of Public Information and the work of the United Nations information centres. It has been noted that the level of interest shown by individual UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators in the work of a centre can make an important difference in its performance. Several of them have made it possible for national information officers to run the daily information operation in a commendable manner, and have given them their full support, as needed. Information activities pertaining to the work of the United Nations system at the country level have been enhanced by UNDP support to the resident coordinator funds.

B. Cost-effectiveness

11. One of the underlying reasons for the Secretary-General's decision in 1992 to integrate certain information centres was to address in the most efficient manner a situation where staff resources in the field were becoming more and more scarce. Integration with UNDP made it possible for all information centres to be maintained, despite the abolition of a large number of director posts at the P-5 and D-1 levels.

12. At the General Service level, the total number of local-level posts for United Nations information centres was reduced by 29 in the current biennium (1998–1999),

resulting in an overall reduction of 40 per cent since the beginning of the integration exercise. With fewer posts available in each information centre, most locally recruited staff members perform multifaceted functions, including information work. Therefore, any further post reductions would not be possible without negatively affecting programme delivery.

13. Other savings relating to the achievement of economies of scale or the sharing of common services have been more difficult to discern. In cases where an information centre has relocated to common premises with UNDP, maintenance and administrative costs have frequently become higher than they were before the move. However, other benefits have been gained, such as a more central location, additional space and better possibilities for coordinating activities with other United Nations offices. Also, co-location has served to enhance a unified image of the United Nations, which was one of the original objectives of integration.

14. There are benefits from sharing communications networks with UNDP offices in common premises. However, experience in this area has not been uniformly positive. Some UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators have made it possible for information centres to use communications systems at reasonable cost. UNDP will encourage all its field offices sharing premises with information centres to facilitate such arrangements.

IV. Next steps

15. To ensure successful integration of United Nations information centres with field offices of UNDP, the purposes of the exercise and the underlying principles, as stated by the General Assembly, must be clearly understood by the parties concerned. Also, UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators must recognize country-level communications in support of the United Nations system as a whole as one of their principal functions. In this regard, a set of guidelines, spelling out the operational framework for the integrated information centres, will be jointly elaborated on the basis of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions. Focal points in the Department of Public Information, UNDP and the United Nations Development Group Office have already been designated for this purpose.

16. Such guidelines should also affirm that the information functions and autonomy of United Nations information centres should not be adversely affected by integration. On the contrary, the aim should be to strengthen information activity overall through collaborative partnership with UNDP and other members of the United Nations country team.

17. Some important steps to address issues arising in the integration exercise have already been taken. The United Nations Development Group and the Department of Public Information are actively engaged in a dialogue to deal with the practical aspects of integration. Tasks relating to directing United Nations information centres are being incorporated in the job descriptions of UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators, where applicable, and the Department will provide input into their performance evaluation with regard to information functions. It has also been agreed that the Department of Public Information will be consulted in the process of selecting UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators in countries where they concurrently serve as centre directors or acting directors. The Department of Public Information has also been invited to join the review of resident coordinators' annual reports.

18. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and the Administrator of UNDP have agreed that training and in-depth briefings of UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators on their communications functions must be strengthened and systematized. A presentation by the Department of Public Information will be included in induction courses held for UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators, and they are encouraged to consult frequently with the Department regarding the operation of the information centres. UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators who also serve as centre directors or acting directors will be invited to participate in regional meetings organized by the Department of Public Information for information centre directors. Discussions are ongoing with UNDP to enhance joint briefing programmes and training workshops for the staff of United Nations information centres and for UNDP public affairs officers.

19. The Department of Public Information will strengthen its support structure at Headquarters to enhance its liaison with UNDP regarding the operations of the integrated information centres. Areas that would benefit from this on a day-to-day basis include: the briefings of UNDP resident representatives/United Nations resident coordinators and UNDP public affairs officers; programmatic support; exchange of information; feedback and evaluation; and questions relating to common premises, personnel and budgetary matters. An objective of such close cooperation should also be to seek opportunities for cost savings through shared common services.

20. The role of the national information officers is particularly important in the integrated information centres, given their professional experience and knowledge of the local media and civil society. In order to enhance the calibre of these local professionals, training opportunities, both local and regional, should be increased and exchanges among United Nations information centres in the same region should be encouraged. Measures aimed at improving the conditions of service and career prospects for this category of staff should also be explored.

21. As requested in resolution 51/138 B, I shall continue the integration exercise within the parameters indicated by the General Assembly, most recently reiterated in its resolution 53/59 B. Every effort will be made to ensure that integrated centres optimize the use of available resources and play their role in promoting the information and communications objectives of the Organization.

V. Conclusions

22. The General Assembly has recognized that the United Nations information centres play an essential role in promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world. In the reform plan, I indicated that the Organization's capacity to communicate at the country level must be strengthened, and that United Nations operations at the country level should be unified in "United Nations houses".

23. The integration of United Nations information centres touches on both these central tenets of the reform plan. Achieving this goal, and with it the original objectives of integration, will depend on an effective partnership between the Department of Public Information and UNDP and the constructive involvement of the United Nations family as a whole. I believe, therefore, that the overall changes I have called for to reorient information and communications activities should include a concerted effort to address the problems encountered in implementation of the integration exercise in a number of information centres.

24. To this end, I have asked the Department of Public Information and UNDP to strengthen their cooperative relationship with the aim of achieving better results in the integration exercise. The Deputy Secretary-General will provide guidance when and if required.

United Nations A/AC.198/1999/4

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 March 1999

Original: English

Committee on Information
Twenty-first session
3–14 May 1999
Substantive questions

United Nations information centres in 1998: allocation of resources from the regular budget of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. An important objective of the reorientation of public information activities is to strengthen the capacity of the Organization to communicate, globally and at the country level, the relevance and success of its work in meeting the challenges of today and of the new millennium. This was also the view of the Secretary-General's 1997 Task Force on the Reorientation of United Nations Public Information Activities, which noted that successful implementation of this objective depended on "more effective central management capacity, a high degree of delegation to adequately resourced country-level communications programmes, and a significantly strengthened two-way flow of communication" (see A/51/950, para. 260 (b)).

2. In meeting the strategic communications priorities of the Organization, the Department of Public Information has re-evaluated its existing communications arrangements. In doing so, it has reaffirmed the unique functions performed by the global network of United Nations information centres in the Organization's communications and public information strategies.

3. In paragraph 25 of its resolution 53/59 B of 3 December 1998, the General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General "to continue to study ways and means of rationalizing and effecting equitable disbursement of available resources to all United Nations information centres and to report thereon to the Committee on Information at its twenty-first session".

4. The present report, prepared in response to the General Assembly's request, includes information on major activities of the 62 United Nations information centres operating in 1998; ongoing efforts to strengthen the information centres; and the resources available for the operation of the information centres. The report does not include information on the work of United Nations information services in Geneva and Vienna, whose budgetary allocations are identified separately under section 26 of the programme budget for the 1998-1999 biennium (public information); nor does the report deal with the information services of the regional commissions, which operate within the administrative and budgetary mandates of each commission.

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II. Functions performed by information centres

5. The United Nations information centres promote greater public understanding of the work of the United Nations through activities that would raise awareness of priority issues for the Organization, major conferences, special events and observances, and reach the widest possible sectors of civil society. They maintain close working relationships with the local media, develop partnerships with non-governmental organizations to broaden their information campaigns, and cooperate with local educators in developing curricula for teaching about the United Nations. Some information centres have supplemented information outreach activities during the past year with the creation, where feasible, of local-language Web sites, which often resulted in an increase in the number of queries and visitors to centre libraries. While only 38 United Nations information centres used electronic mail in 1995, today almost all centres, along with United Nations information services and United Nations offices, use improved electronic communications systems. All centres have been equipped with modern data-processing and office equipment, improving their capacity both to produce local-language products and to disseminate information directly and through local redisseminators.

6. United Nations information centres continued to keep the Secretariat informed of local public opinion and media coverage of the United Nations activities, and responded to misperceptions about the United Nations when they arose in the local media. In addition to assisting the Secretary-General or the Deputy Secretary-General in their official travel, information centres also provided logistical assistance to United Nations system partners, arranging for press conferences and media contacts for visiting senior officials, launching major reports or information campaigns and providing other types of assistance to various United Nations departments and offices, including arrangements for recruitment examinations.

7. The report of the Secretary-General on the evaluation of the United Nations information centres,[1] submitted to the Committee on Information at its nineteenth session in 1997, confirmed the role of United Nations information centres as local focal points for information emanating from the United Nations system as a whole. Based on a comprehensive background review and an extensive field survey, the report concluded, among other things, that information centres play a key role in engaging and supporting non-governmental organizations and other local organizations in community-based activities aimed at highlighting United Nations themes, and that "by virtue of their close contact with the community and their knowledge of local interests and trends, United Nations information centres ha[d] a unique capability to tailor and deliver the United Nations message with maximum impact" (see A/AC.198/1997/6, para. 50). The survey also found that the use of new communications technology had not diminished, but rather increased, the demand for their services, as the centres were able to "customize, package and provide hands-on assistance to individuals and organizations" (see A/AC.198/1997/6, para. 49).

III. Highlights of centre activities in 1998

8. The role of United Nations information centres as communicators and catalysts was particularly evident in the range and depth of activities that they carried out throughout 1998, the fiftieth anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition to all priority issues on the United Nations agenda, the information centres actively publicized the special session of the General Assembly devoted to countering the world drug problem together, the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court and the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, held in Portugal. These activities in all parts of the world contributed to stimulating local interest in global issues, encouraging debate and underscoring the role of the United Nations in providing an international forum for dialogue and cooperation.

9. Throughout the fiftieth anniversary year of the Universal Declaration, United Nations information centres conducted many successful public outreach programmes by joining forces with all segments of society to publicize the achievements of the United Nations in the field of human rights and to raise awareness of the need for further action. In addition to having the Universal Declaration translated into 55 local languages, the centres organized seminars, public rallies, exhibits and a variety of imaginative activities under the theme of "All human rights for all".

10. At the initiative of the United Nations Information Centre in Rome, a year-long worldwide advocacy programme was undertaken in cooperation with a major clothing company. The campaign featured the fiftieth anniversary logo, with the text of articles from the Universal Declaration reproduced on billboards and posters as well as in television, newspaper and magazine advertisements. It is

estimated that this campaign reached some 480 million people in 60 countries with the support of information centres in Buenos Aires, Mexico City and Paris, as well as the United Nations Information Service in Vienna. The United Nations Information Centre in Athens initiated a far-reaching campaign for a nationwide brochure competition based on the Universal Declaration, involving businesses, schools, non-governmental organizations and Government offices. Participants were asked to print and distribute at least 1,000 copies of their brochures, featuring the Universal Declaration and the fiftieth anniversary logo. As a result, some 45,000 copies were distributed in the country.

11. Throughout the year, the information centres also cooperated with schools, educators and student groups to develop educational programmes and human rights curricula. Younger students were involved in activities designed to present the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in an easy-to-understand format, often including drawing competitions, question-and-answer sessions and special projects. The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City helped a group of local college students to launch a project involving a series of briefings for some 3,000 elementary school children in the capital. The United Nations Information Centre in Lima, through its "Friends of the United Nations School Clubs", organized educational activities for hundreds more. Older students took part in model United Nations conferences, quiz programmes, poster and slogan competitions and debates. Several information centres, including those in Asunción, Colombo, Lima, Lagos, Madrid, New Delhi, Panama City, Paris and Warsaw, carried out national student essay and poster contests. Others, such as the centres in Kathmandu and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the United Nations Office in Uzbekistan, held other local contests.

12. Many useful educational information products were developed by United Nations information centres and local partners. The United Nations Information Centre in Buenos Aires launched an interactive educational programme for use in elementary, intermediate and high school classrooms. The four-diskette kit was developed by the Centre and the Organization of Argentine Youth and co-financed by two corporate sponsors. The United Nations Information Centre in Copenhagen, in cooperation with the Government of Denmark, the United Nations Association and the Danish Centre for Human Rights, produced an educational CD-ROM containing the text of the Universal Declaration and animated games.

13. The information centres and non-governmental organizations were also successful in bringing thousands of people together to show their support for human rights and the United Nations. Activities included torchlight processions and marches in many countries, including Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Denmark, Italy, the Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe. Sporting and cultural events, seminars and public debates organized by the information centres also sparked widespread interest in the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration. For example, some 45,000 people attended a rock music concert organized by the United Nations Information Centre in Santa Fé de Bogota, while some 36,000 people took part in a two-day human rights festival in Japan, co-sponsored by the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo and the municipal government. Other information centres, including those in Cairo, Dakar, Harare, Maseru, Nairobi and Rabat, organized human rights events on behalf of organizations in the United Nations system represented in their country.

14. Centres in Bucharest, Lima, Rabat and United Nations offices in Belarus and Uzbekistan produced local-language adaptations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for children. Centres in Lima, Madrid and Panama City cooperated with local non-governmental organizations in publishing the Spanish text of the Universal Declaration in Braille. Many other information materials were also made available on the information centres' Web sites which, in early 1999, were maintained by information centres in Antananarivo, Athens, Beirut, Bonn, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Copenhagen, Islamabad, Lisbon, London, Mexico City, Panama City, Prague, Paris, Rome and Tokyo; United Nations information services in Bangkok and Geneva; and the United Nations Office in Belarus. Several other Web sites were under construction.

15. The special session of the General Assembly devoted to countering the world drug problem together, held in June 1998, provided yet another opportunity for the information centres to publicize the diversity and relevance of United Nations activities. In addition to having fact sheets and information notes prepared at Headquarters translated into local languages and widely disseminated, the centres produced feature articles and published news supplements in cooperation with local and national newspapers.

16. Press conferences were held in partnership with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and local non-governmental organizations prior to and during the special session. Special media briefings were organized by the centres in Santa Fé de Bogota, Yangon and Washington, D. C., with participation by the Executive Director of UNDCP. The United Nations Information Centre in Mexico City also organized a satellite video conference connecting 50 journalists from Central America and Mexico with the Executive Director of

UNDCP, who spoke from Vienna. United Nations information centres were instrumental in arranging for national print and broadcasting media coverage of the special session, including several co-productions undertaken in partnership with local broadcasters. The public service announcement entitled "The cleaning lady", dubbed by United Nations information centres into 13 local languages, was widely disseminated. In Japan, for example, it was aired three times a day for one month, free-of-charge, on a giant screen at one of the busiest commuter hubs in Tokyo, giving an estimated 370,000 daily travellers the opportunity to view it.

17. Throughout the year, the information centres also continued to help draw public attention to the United Nations system-wide activities for economic and social development everywhere. A majority of information centres assisted with the launch of key United Nations development-related publications, including the reports on economic and social development published by the regional commissions, annual *Human Development Report* produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006) (A/53/329), involving press briefings and media interviews. Other information centres, including those in Antananarivo, Colombo, Dakar, Dhaka, Maseru, New Delhi and Tehran as well as the United Nations Office in Azerbaijan arranged journalist's tours to publicize United Nations development projects. Many centres also held local and regional seminars to examine development strategies.

18. In addition to having the information materials on development issues produced by the Department of Public Information translated, the information centres published accounts of important projects and surveys. For example, the United Nations Information Centre in Warsaw produced a publication entitled *Understanding the World: A Framework for Action,* drafted during a workshop held in connection with a national student essay contest on poverty. Some centres also produced many radio and television programmes on development, while several others, including those in Cairo, Islamabad, Manila, Panama City, Port of Spain, Tunis and Washington, D. C., coordinated inter-agency information committees on development issues, resulting in more efficient and focused public outreach programmes.

IV. Staffing resources

19. The Secretary-General noted in paragraph 10 of his 1997 report[1] that "although the volume and complexity of work has increased, the number of posts available to United Nations information centres, in both the Professional and General Service categories, has been drastically reduced since the late 1980s". In fact, the number of established regular budget posts available to all United Nations information centres in 1998 was 10 per cent below the 1995 level and more than 40 per cent below the 1990 level. During the same period, four new information centres were established without additional financial implications for the regular budget. The contribution of host Governments providing extrabudgetary posts to United Nations information centres has therefore become more valuable and essential today than ever before.

20. Against this background, the centres continued to make every effort to discharge their mandated tasks. As noted in paragraph 53 of the 1997 report, they did so through "innovative approaches to their work, maximum use of the information technologies at their disposal, and staff who perform multiple tasks, in close consultation with Headquarters".

21. In addition to maintaining close contact with information centres via telephone, electronic mail and facsimile, the Department of Public Information at Headquarters relies on the computerized activity reporting system it developed in 1996 as a means of providing the centres with effective programme guidance and support. The system allows the Department to monitor programme performance, help plan for future activities and provide timely feedback and assistance to help enhance programme planning and implementation by the information centres.

22. In view of the diminishing human resources, a continuing process of professional training has assumed greater importance, whether in the use of information technology or the development of substantive knowledge. During the past year, the Department organized a training programme for reference assistants from United Nations information centres in the Americas (Mexico City, July 1998) to provide them with intensive hands-on training in electronic information retrieval and processing as well as with an opportunity to share experiences and forge stronger professional ties. Later, a four-day meeting of centre directors and other senior information staff in the field was organized at Headquarters (September 1998), focusing, among other things, on the role of information centres in making the United Nations better understood; coordination of information activities among United Nations system partners in the field; cooperation with non-governmental organizations; and effective use of new communications technology. The meeting provided an opportunity for the participants and senior officials at Headquarters to discuss

substantive policies and strategies for effective information outreach to all segments of society and also to consult with members of the Committee on Information. The Department plans to hold similar training workshops in other regions.

23. Currently, there are 34 information centres headed by a resident representative of UNDP/United Nations Resident Coordinator, including 18 integrated centres. Eight additional United Nations Offices with information components are joint offices of the Department of Public Information and UNDP headed by United Nations resident coordinators. The 1990 memorandum of understanding between the Department of Public Information and UNDP on field representation has remained the framework for cooperation at the country level. This continued cooperation has served the dual purpose of projecting a unified image of the United Nations in the field and striving for cost-effectiveness through the sharing of common services. (A separate report on the integration exercise is before the Committee at the current session.[2])

V. Financial resources

24. Funds to cover the operating costs of the information centres in 1998 were below the levels of previous years. The bulk of the operating funds are disbursed for the rental and maintenance of offices, reference libraries and meeting rooms, and for communications, as well as for acquisition and maintenance of data-processing and office equipment. Some funds are allocated for translation and printing in local languages and for travel within the areas serviced by the information centres for outreach activities.

25. By 1998, some financial restrictions imposed in late 1995 and 1996 had been eased, allowing the information centres to benefit from the supply of office and modern communications equipment. All information centres received new computers and printers. Funds were allocated to train the staff in the use of information technology and will be provided on an ongoing basis as equipment is updated. In addition, funds will be made available for staff development and for regional workshops organized by the Department of Public Information.

26. In 1998, the level of extrabudgetary funding did not reach the levels achieved in earlier years. However, it should be pointed out that financial assistance provided by several host Governments has been invaluable to the information centres and their continued operation. In addition to annual financial contributions received from Governments, more than 30 Governments continue to provide information centres with rent-free premises. Some Governments provide extrabudgetary posts, while others provide ad hoc contributions for funding special information projects within the mandate of the information centres. All these contributions are greatly appreciated. The annex to the present report provides a breakdown of host Government assistance to information centres in 1998.

Notes

[1] A/AC.198/1997/6.

[2] A/AC.198/1999/3.

Annex

Allocation of resources for rental of premises and host Government assistance

Centres	*Established*	*Department of Public Information posts (1998)*	*Rental of premises in 1998 (United States dollars)*	*Host Government support*	
				Extrabudgetary staff	*Cash contribution received for 1998 (United States dollars)*
Accra	March 1958	P-4, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Algiers[a]	September 1963	2 local staff	Rent-free		
Ankara[a]	March 1975	2 local staff	7 500		
Antananarivo[a]	January 1963	2 local staff	10 000		
Asunción[a]	October 1962	2 local staff	11 300		
Athens	April 1954	P-5, 5 local staff	55 000		48 197
Beirut	September 1962	5 local staff	Rent-free		
Bonn	January 1995	D-1, 3 local staff	Rent-free		
Brazzaville	June 1983	4 local staff	Rent-free		
Brussels	January 1975	5 local staff	70 361		63 830
Bucharest[a]	June 1970	1 local staff	Rent-free	3 local staff	51 760
Buenos Aires	November 1948	P-4, 5 local staff	Rent-free		70 000
Bujumbura	June 1961	2 local staff	Rent-free		
Cairo[a]	April 1949	5 local staff	Rent-free		1 152
Colombo[a]	August 1961	3 local staff	Rent-free		612
Copenhagen	December 1946	P-5, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Dakar	April 1964	3 local staff	Rent-free		
Dar es Salaam	June 1961	3 local staff	Rent-free		
Dhaka	August 1981	4 local staff	4 475		3 000
Harare	November 1982	P-5, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Islamabad	March 1951	P-4, 4 local staff	13 670		6 500
Jakarta	August 1985	P-5, 3 local staff	Rent-free		
Kabul[b]	October 1959				
Kathmandu[a]	April 1964	2 local staff	4 000		
Khartoum	October 1963	4 local staff	Rent-free		
Kinshasa[a]	July 1964	2 local staff	11 000		
Lagos	May 1967	P-5, 4 local staff	Rent-free	1 local staff	Not received for 1998
La Paz[a]	September 1963	3 local staff	6 877		Not received for 1998
Lima	April 1960	5 local staff	33 973		
Lisbon	November 1977	P-4, 3 local staff	Rent-free	2 local staff	95 677
Lomé[a]	May 1962	4 local staff	Rent-free		
London	January 1947	D-1, 7 local staff	135 000		
Lusaka	October 1975	P-5, 3 local staff	Rent-free		
Madrid	May 1986	P-5, 5 local staff	Rent-free		27 704
Managua[a]	July 1984		Rent-free		Not received since 1995

Centres	Established	Department of Public Information posts (1998)	Rental of premises in 1998 (United States dollars)	Host Government support	
				Extrabudgetary staff	Cash contribution received for 1998 (United States dollars)
Manama	November 1977		Rent-free	3 local staff	33 000
Manila	August 1953	4 local staff	Rent-free		
Maseru[a]	February 1979	3 local staff	Rent-free		
Mexico City	August 1947	P-5, 5 local staff	91 100		1 125
Monrovia[b]	October 1950				
Moscow	April 1948	D-1, 5 local staff	41 140		
Nairobi	August 1974	3 local staff	12 660		
New Delhi	January 1947	D-1, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Ouagadougou	April 1982	P-4, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Panama City[a]	September 1984	2 local staff	Rent-free	3 local staff	
Paris	March 1947	D-1, P-3, 8 local staff	Rent-free		8 400
Port of Spain	January 1962	P-4, 4 local staff	28 646		1 932
Prague	December 1947	P-4, 4 local staff	Rent-free		25 000
Pretoria	March 1996	P-5, 3 local staff	Rent-free		
Rabat	December 1962	5 local staff	20 000		6 145
Rio de Janeiro	March 1947	P-5, 5 local staff	Rent-free		Not received since 1992
Rome	July 1958	D-2, 5 local staff	Rent-free		
Sana'a	April 1994	2 local staff	Rent-free		
San Salvador[b]	July 1960				
Santa Fé de Bogota	May 1954	5 local staff	55 649		80 000
Sydney	November 1948	P-5, 5 local staff	49 000		
Tehran	May 1950	P-4, 2 local staff	16 000		
Tokyo	April 1958	D-1, 7 local staff	196 610		150 000
Tripoli	January 1980		Rent-free	3 local staff	Not received for 1998
Tunis	May 1960	P-5, 3 local staff	Rent-free		
Warsaw	August 1995		Rent-free	3 local staff	49 549
Washington, D.C.	October 1946	D-1, P-4, 6 local staff	157 145		
Windhoek	October 1992	3 local staff	Rent-free		
Yangon[a]	June 1959	4 local staff	Rent-free		
Yaoundé	October 1965	4 local staff	Rent-free		

[a] Integrated centres.

[b] Not operational.

United Nations A/AC.198/1999/5

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 March 1999

Original: English

Committee on Information
Twenty-first session
3–14 May 1999
Substantive questions

Development of United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity: design and scope of a pilot project

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 32 of resolution 53/59 B of 3 December 1998, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General "to submit a report on the design and scope of the pilot project regarding United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity, which would be considered by the Committee on Information at its twenty-first session in 1999".

2. In paragraph 33 of the same resolution, the General Assembly noted, "in that context, that the Department of Public Information intend[ed] to contact Member States in order to ascertain their preparedness to provide technical facilities for the pilot project and to include that information in the report mentioned in paragraph 32 above".

3. The Department of Public Information has conducted research and consulted with a number of regional and international radio broadcasting organizations on trends in national and international broadcasting, the most suitable programme design for target regions in different languages and the most cost-effective means for the timely delivery of United Nations radio programming to national and regional audiences.

4. In the limited time available between the adoption of resolution 53/59 B and the preparation of the present report, a number of Member States [illegible]regional groups were also contacted, as provided for in the resolution. They were unable to make a commitment regarding broadcasting facilities for the pilot project without consultation with their respective broadcasting organizations. Since the determination of the availability of broadcasting facilities required information of a technical nature, the Department of Public Information prepared a questionnaire for circulation to major broadcasting organizations that have the appropriate facilities in different regions. At its meeting held on 11 February 1999, the Bureau of the Committee on Information expressed the view that there was not enough time to circulate the questionnaire, receive and analyse the responses and include the results in the present report in a timely manner. The Bureau agreed, therefore, that the report should be prepared in time for the twenty-first session and that the questionnaire should be circulated at a later date.

5. The Department has reviewed United Nations radio programme production in different languages, as well as distribution patterns, in order to determine the effectiveness of programme dissemination and rebroadcasting. The review took into consideration the current formats of programme output in the light of the various options offered by emerging

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new telecommunications technologies, including the digital audio broadcasting and Web casting on the Internet. Staff production resources, technical facilities and operational funds were also reviewed to determine how they could be adapted to the requirements of the pilot project.

6. The process of research and consultation has revealed the complexity of the task of designing multiple programme formats in different languages for broadcasting to audiences in disparate geographical regions with distinct listening habits, using a variety of dissemination technologies. The sparse resources currently available in the Department for this purpose are another key consideration. In addition, new trends in the broadcast industry, coupled with fast-developing new communications technologies present challenges and offer opportunities for the project under review.

II. The current broadcasting environment

7. Recent structural and technological developments in the global radio broadcasting industry are setting new market trends. In several regions, deregulation and the breakup of State-run superstations have led to fragmentation and the growth of a large number of immensely popular independent radio stations. While, in some regions, State-owned corporations still control technical and transmission facilities, there is an explosion in the number of private FM radio stations that command a respectable following. The collective outreach and impact of these radio stations on local audiences worldwide has been recognized by traditional leaders of shortwave broadcasting. Shortwave broadcasters such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service, the Voice of America, Deutsche Welle and Radio France Internationale, are making airtime lease or sharing arrangements with local and national broadcasting organizations in developing countries to rebroadcast their programmes to local audiences. These arrangements have enhanced the impact of shortwave broadcasters, by giving their programming a local flavour. This is not to say that major international broadcasters are relinquishing the medium of shortwave broadcasting. The BBC World Service still claims a total of some 132 million listeners worldwide on shortwave, while the Voice of America's shortwave audiences are estimated at 86 million.

8. Technological innovations in the radio broadcasting industry are enhancing the spectrum, improving sound quality and adding hundreds of channels and multiple choices for larger audiences. Digital audio broadcasting, which is already being tested, will increase the range of channels available to listeners and will deliver radio programmes in compact disc quality over longer distances. It will also achieve significant savings in transmission costs. Direct satellite broadcasting is a revolutionary radio technology that could transform the whole industry. The Washington-based WorldSpace Corporation, which is the pioneer in the new technology of direct station-to-satellite-to-receiver broadcasting, launched its first direct broadcast satellite, AfriStar, in October 1998. AfriStar, which targets Africa and the Middle East, was expected to become operational in April 1999. Two more satellites, AsiaStar and AmeriStar, are scheduled to be launched before the end of the decade and will broadcast to Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. WorldSpace estimates that, when fully operational, its network of direct satellite broadcasting will cover more than 4.6 billion people in the developing world with "socially responsible" programming. It envisages delivering compact disc-quality programmes through hundreds of satellite channels.

9. The use of the Internet as a multimedia vehicle for the dissemination of information is gaining rapid popularity. For radio purposes, the Internet is demonstrating its versatility as a medium for the delivery of programming that serves the needs of a newly emerging constituency of users. In North America alone, more than 2,000 radio stations use the Internet for Web casting, in addition to their regular AM and FM channels. However, the reliability of the Internet as a broadcast medium is contingent on further technological developments to enhance the bandwidth, and also on its broad availability in developing countries.

10. The Department is making strenuous efforts to harness and deploy various aspects of the new communications technology described above in its pursuit of quicker, higher-quality dissemination of the radio material that it offers. The development of a United Nations international radio capacity is one of the important ingredients of the Department's broad-based drive for technological innovation.

III. Pilot broadcasting project

11. The design and scope of the Department's pilot broadcasting project link four main components: production capacity, linguistic diversity, telecommunications technology and target audiences. Taking into consideration the available levels of production resources and the multiple choices offered by new and emerging telecommunications technologies, the design and scope of the pilot project is predicated on the following factors:

(a) The need to maintain and, where possible, enhance the current levels of programme production and delivery in the six official languages of the Organization to all recipient regions;

(b) The need to use all available telecommunications technologies, including shortwave, digital audio broadcasting via satellite and the Internet, for programme delivery, depending on the feasibility, availability and effectiveness of each technology in the respective target region;

(c) The availability of public and private broadcasters in each region and country willing to provide airtime for United Nations radio programmes on the basis of a regular schedule;

(d) The importance of increasing the frequency of the delivery of programmes to national, regional and international audiences, preferably on the basis of a daily schedule, where feasible;

(e) The need to streamline radio programme output and to reorient production resources towards more frequent direct broadcasting, which would reduce dependency on the pattern of tape programme distribution;

(f) The need to supplement limited production and transmission resources to enable United Nations Radio to cope with the increasing demand for broadcast radio information about the activities of the United Nations and the organizations of the common system;

(g) The need to pre-position additional resources to backstop radio broadcasting in peacekeeping operations, where radio is deemed a primary source of information.

12. Based on the foregoing considerations, including linguistic multiplicity and the diversity of available broadcasting technologies, the design of the proposed pilot project would seek to provide the following services:

(a) A daily package of a 5- to 15-minute duration, consisting of news, interviews and features for broadcast to national and regional audiences in countries and regions where airtime may be made available for this purpose. This will be determined by the results of a questionnaire that has been prepared by the Department of Public Information to gauge the interest of Member States and their national broadcasting systems;

(b) Weekly regional magazines (10- to 15-minute duration) focusing on issues, activities and personalities of exclusive regional interest. This would also integrate contributions from the organizations of the common system, reflecting their projects and field activities;

(c) Special news bulletins covering meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly that are of particular interest to specific countries and regions. This would also include transmission of statements of interest to national and regional audiences for rebroadcast by relevant radio stations;

(d) Feature programme series on core issues of interest to national, regional and international audiences. This may include co-production projects with national and international broadcasters.

13. The scope of programme distribution/rebroadcasting will cover regions where the six official languages of the Organization are used as principal languages, and to the extent that effective broadcasting facilities are made available on a scheduled basis. In this respect, the pilot broadcasting project will endeavour to use the most effective radio delivery system available in the target region. This will include shortwave, AM/FM and satellite distribution for rebroadcasting. Electronic audio file transfer, for example, is now being used to deliver Chinese language programmes to rebroadcasting stations in China and in the United States of America.

14. The duration of the pilot project would be one year in two six-month periods, to be followed by an evaluation. The main objective of the pilot project would be the improvement of the current pattern of programme distribution and placement.

15. Programme design and frequency of delivery may be adapted to the schedule of a major carrier that covers significant population density in a single official language. In this case, components outlined in the programme design in paragraph 12 above may be combined or redesigned to suit the broadcast schedule of a given network.

IV. Telecommunications technology

16. Available broadcasting technology will determine the mode and frequency of transmission to each target region. This takes into consideration the fact that global radio broadcasting is undergoing a transition to new technologies, such as digital audio broadcasting, direct satellite broadcasting and the Internet.

17. Research data indicate that a combination of shortwave and satellite distribution for national and regional broadcasting would enable United Nations Radio to cover Africa with daily programme packages in English and French. This would be done by entering into rebroadcasting arrangements with a number of regional and international

broadcasting organizations. The same English programme design would be made available in Asia, excluding countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and China. Broadcasting facilities would be negotiated with national and regional broadcasting institutions with which United Nations Radio has rebroadcasting arrangements.

18. In Latin America, the rapid evolution of technology is transforming the broadcast industry on an unprecedented scale. Daily telephone news feeds and electronic audio file transfer through the Internet, as well as the delivery of weekly magazine programmes to individual FM radio stations and to major networks broadcasting on AM and shortwave, would be the backbone of programme design and mode of transmission for both Portuguese and Spanish language programmes. Programme content and media of transmission would consistently take advantage of the fast-paced developments in new technologies in the region as they evolve. A gradual expansion and diversification of programming is envisioned as more and more stations embrace the Internet as a communications and Web casting medium. Satellite distribution for rebroadcasting would be pursued as it develops. Tape programme distribution would be reviewed and scaled down as a growing number of stations develop the capacity for timely reception and rebroadcast of United Nations radio programmes.

19. In the Caribbean, where shortwave listening habits are extremely limited, arrangements would be made with the Caribbean News Agency and broadcasting institutions for satellite distribution to interested broadcasters of a daily programme, led by a Caribbean-specific segment. The pilot project would take advantage of Internet technology as it develops in the region. Endeavours are being made to attract new AM and FM stations that may be interested in timely news packages through audio streaming technology on the Internet. Tape programme distribution would be reviewed.

20. Arrangements would be made to redesign Russian programme production into more frequent news and feature packages, to be prepared for rebroadcast several times a week, targeting audiences in the Russian-speaking regions. Modes of transmission would include both shortwave broadcasting and satellite distribution. New and emerging FM stations which can access the Internet would be provided with the same packages in electronic file format for rebroadcasting. Transmission emphasis would shift to the Internet wherever it becomes available. Shortwave and other broadcasting facilities are being sought from countries of the region.

21. The main target region for programme production in Chinese is China. Under long-term arrangements, two major broadcasting organizations, China National Radio and China Radio International, receive and rebroadcast United Nations radio programmes on a regular basis. Recently, both networks, as well as Radio and Television Hong Kong, have begun receiving transmissions of United Nations radio programmes through the medium of electronic file transfer, with excellent results. Radio programmes in Chinese are also hosted on the Web site of a New Jersey-based private communications corporation, Infinity Interactive, Inc. Consultations are under way with the two major broadcasters in China on a new programme design.

22. Arabic language radio programmes are transmitted to broadcasting organizations in the Middle East by telephone, via radio circuit and on tape. There is already expressed interest from Radio Cairo, which transmits United Nations radio programmes on medium and shortwave to the Middle East and Africa, to provide airtime on a regular basis four times per week for United Nations radio programmes. Similar expressions of interest from major broadcasting organizations in the region could expand the range of programme dissemination. Electronic audio file transfer technology is also being explored to ensure more timely delivery of news and current affairs programmes.

V. Conclusions

23. A small-scale pilot programme in connection with the Department's direct international radio broadcasting project could be launched in the six official languages for rebroadcast in all linguistic target regions for a period of one year. It would seek to test the technical feasibility, programming capacity, resource requirements and listeners' interest for the purposes of the development of a United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity.

24. In view of the need for linguistic diversity, and with due consideration of resource constraints, diverse telecommunications technologies and availability of timely rebroadcasting facilities, programme design and frequency of delivery may vary from region to region. The overall emphasis would be on the production and delivery of timely news packages and current affairs programmes on a daily and weekly basis to wider audiences, using more effective modes of transmission, including satellite distribution and the Internet.

25. For the pilot project, staff and technical production resources, programme formats and modes of transmission would be adapted to ensure timely and more frequent delivery of programmes. This may include streamlining of programme production and scaling down tape programme distribution.

26. The successful implementation of the pilot and, to the same extent, of the direct international radio broadcasting project itself, will depend upon the support of Member States that have national or international radio broadcasting or distribution systems where airtime could be made available to United Nations Radio for broadcast of its programmes.

27. The pilot project, as described above, is designed to test the technical feasibility, programming capacity and listeners' interest in a United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity. However, as indicated in chapter I above, no concrete commitment has yet been made by any Member State or broadcast organization to provide the technical facilities needed for this pilot project. Similarly, no Member State or institution has responded to the request by the Secretary-General contained in his report on the development of United Nations international radio broadcasting capacity (A/AC.198/1998/4) to contribute resources for the development of such a capacity. In view of this, and of the scale of extrabudgetary resources needed for the main project (approximately 4 million United States dollars per year for the next several years), the Department of Public Information does not plan to initiate the complex and demanding pilot project until there are clear indications from Member States and others of the availability of the resources required. In the meantime, the Department will continue to harness all affordable aspects of technological innovation in the ongoing modernization of United Nations Radio.

United Nations A/AC.198/1999/6

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 March 1999

Original: English

Committee on Information
Twenty-first session
3–14 May 1999
Substantive questions

Continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations Websites

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In resolution 53/208 C of 18 December 1998, the General Assembly stressed "the need for the continuous development, maintenance and enrichment of United Nations websites, with a view to achieving equal treatment of the six official languages on those websites" and requested "the Secretary-General to submit proposals in this connection to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session through the Committee on Conferences and the Committee on Information". The present report contains input from various departments and offices of the United Nations Secretariat that provide information for posting on the United Nations website.

I. Executive summary

2. Since its launch in June 1995, the United Nations Website has developed into a major storehouse of online information and is now available mainly in English and French, with limited materials in the other official languages.

3. Three proposals are presented in the present report. The first would ensure full parity among all official language websites by the end of 2001; the second would achieve the same objective over a longer period of time; while the third would seek to make available certain elements in each of the languages in accordance with the level of funding made available for this purpose. In every case, however, some initial investment is required to ensure that the necessary development of United Nations website activities is an integral part of the Organization's regular work programme.

4. The request for a report on the issue of language parity and the corresponding resource requirements has come at a stage when the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 had already been finalized. As such, the resource requirements for the continuation of Website activities in the other official languages and further development of the multimedia section of the United Nations Website would be in addition to the 2000–2001 budget proposals for programme 23, Public information, and will need to be addressed, should the Committee decide to endorse one of the three options proposed in the present report.

II. Introduction

5. The United Nations website (www.un.org) was launched on 26 June 1995 as a pilot project, in English only, featuring some basic information on the work of the Organization. It was formally launched in September 1995 and has since then grown into a major undertaking. The website has undergone a series of expansions, with the addition of French and Spanish sites in September 1996,

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Russian in April 1998 and Arabic and Chinese in November 1998. In March 1998, a daily United Nations radio news service in English and French was added to the website, followed by Spanish soon thereafter. On 4 March 1999, the first United Nations audio-visual website was launched, including United Nations radio feature programmes illustrated with photographs and other graphics, as well as audio and video clips. The United Nations website now routinely receives approximately 2.8 million accesses every week from over 140 countries. The number of accesses has grown from 489,000 in January 1996 to over 12 million in January 1999.

III. Background

6. According to statistics,[1] some 164 million computer users around the world have access to the Internet, of which 55 per cent are from English-speaking countries. Of the remainder, 19 per cent speak Spanish, 18.4 per cent each German and Japanese, 9.5 per cent French and 6.2 per cent Chinese as their main language. As far as the United Nations website is concerned, of the average 2.8 million weekly accesses, more than 63,000 are for information in French, almost 37,000 for Spanish. Trends are only emerging for the other three languages. Technical and operating system constraints make website development in scripts other than roman more labour-intensive. As the level of available technology developed and existing staff acquired skills, the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with a number of other departments and offices, embarked on a project aimed at making the United Nations website available in all official languages, covering priority issues for the Organization. There were few precedents or guidelines to work with in establishing these sites, because a true multilingual and multimedia website of this magnitude has not yet been established anywhere.

IV. Current situation

7. The United Nations website is a constantly growing knowledge base updated on a daily basis with United Nations news, information, major reports and parliamentary documents, pages created on demand for United Nations conferences and events, commemorations of United Nations days, anniversaries, years and decades, and new websites from various United Nations offices and departments. It also provides links to websites of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. Member States, civil society, educational institutions and the media have been according greater importance to, and placing greater reliance on, the website, which has been performing two functions: (a) providing large new audiences with speedier access to important information about the work of the Organization; and (b) realizing greater efficiencies and optimizing the application of given resources for the dissemination of information.

8. The Department of Public Information coordinates, manages and maintains the United Nations website with the various departments and offices creating, presenting and posting their own materials. There are many links to websites that have been created and are being maintained by other offices of the United Nations system on remote Web servers, very few of which provide information in languages other than English.

9. The existence and operation of the United Nations website has been formally recognized by the General Assembly in its resolutions. As with any new activity, there are initial start-up and recurrent costs. It is important to point out that, until now, all the United Nations website activities have been carried out within existing resources, involving some temporary redeployment of staff, dispersal of related functions and restructuring of activities. Redeploying staff and resources from existing resources to attain language parity on the website and further development of the multimedia section of the United Nations website could only be achieved at the cost of a significant reduction in current programme activities, with a consequent reduction in the volume and scope of material to be presented on the Web. At this stage, a critical point has been reached, requiring a careful analysis of all relevant issues with a view to taking a decision on the appropriate allocation of resources for further development of the new medium. The full potential of the Internet can only be leveraged through investment in the technical architecture and infrastructure necessary to support the increased bandwidth and traffic requirements of multimedia contents, as well as the larger volume of traditional contents in all six official languages.

V. Critical issues

10. Among the important considerations are the growth of the Website, time-sensitive information, search and retrieval capabilities and multimedia elements with text incorporated into them. All of the above need to be borne in mind when planning for equitable representation of all official languages on the United Nations Website.

11. It must be noted in this regard that a large amount of information issued by the Secretariat on a daily basis, such as press releases, the United Nations Journal, daily lists of documents, daily press briefings (text and video) and statements and printed material issued by the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General, are made available in English and French or in English only. The responsibility for making this information available in the six official languages would need to rest with the issuing offices, since, owing to the time-sensitive nature of the information, it would not be feasible to send it to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services for translation. Accordingly, any daily recurrent time-sensitive translation effort of this magnitude would require special staffing arrangements, such as those currently in place for the French language site.

12. Keeping up with the extremely fast-moving nature of the development of the Internet, including the multimedia features that add to the attractiveness of the Internet, poses a challenge for the Organization. With the two-year programme budget cycle, it is extremely difficult to predict the course of technology for the latter part of the cycle and thus plan and budget for it adequately. The pilot websites in Arabic, Chinese and Russian were launched and are being maintained through the use of limited general temporary assistance funds, a situation that will need to be addressed during the consideration of the programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001. The multimedia initiatives have also been undertaken within existing resources. However, an initial investment would be required for the dissemination of all United Nations radio programmes in high-fidelity audio, and high-resolution United Nations photographs that can be downloaded for immediate use by the media. While some resources have been identified for the dissemination of high-quality materials through the Internet in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, the large-scale dissemination of multimedia contents and the strategic honing of Internet technology with traditional United Nations broadcasting and production would require either resources above those indicated in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, or a redeployment of the resources currently earmarked for the vital area of preservation and conservation of audio-visual archives, for instance.

13. Furthermore, a number of organizational issues, such as the extent to which content-providing departments would be responsible for the additional task of providing content in all languages, or the extent to which the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services would provide the necessary support for language issues, would need to be resolved. Interdepartmental discussions on this issue have already been initiated. Expansion of the website with parity among all official languages will require a significant investment in management and maintenance resources for both the content and the technical aspects of the operation. Technical infrastructure improvements will also have to be carried out.

14. Formulating proposals for according equal treatment to all six official languages on a website of this magnitude is extremely complex and costly. The rapid advent of multimedia elements, such as audio and video, also has serious implications. Such an endeavour has not been attempted on any known website on this scale, nor is there in-house experience or expertise in this area. Moreover, any set of proposals could be overtaken by rapid advances in technology even during the course of in-depth consideration of possible options.

VI. Proposals

15. Three proposals of a general nature, seeking to address the issue of equitable treatment of all official languages, are contained in the present report for consideration by Member States. Because of the fast-changing nature of the Internet, it is extremely difficult to attach a firm estimate of required resources. However, general and comparative resource estimates are provided in order to place the expense and scope of the additional work involved into perspective. The actual cost estimates will need to be worked out once the General Assembly decides which option to pursue, based on a feasibility study that would need to be undertaken at a cost of approximately US$ 1 million, for which the necessary additional appropriation would need to be made.

16. Under proposal A, all languages would be accorded equal treatment on the United Nations Website regardless of the current availability of materials in other languages or the level of technology in those languages. All differences in the availability of material among official languages should be overcome by the end of 2001, so long as the required funding is available.

17. Proposal B seeks to establish the necessary infrastructure to service and provide equitable coverage of all official languages beginning on 1 January 2001. The level of differences at that time would be addressed incrementally over a period of several bienniums, as staff and technological resources are made available.

18. Proposal C presents a modular approach. Under this option, certain modules of the website would be made available in some languages, while addressing the issue of equality on an incremental basis over a period of several bienniums in accordance with the availability of appropriate resources.

19. Under each of the above-mentioned proposals, the language materials already available in their conventional format, namely parliamentary documents and audio-visual materials, would be added to the United Nations website.

1. Proposal A: full parity among official languages

20. This is by far the most ambitious proposal. Under this option, all materials not available in any language would be translated and rendered into Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) for posting on the United Nations website. Databases and records would be translated and special computer programmes would be written to access and update these databases and records.

21. Upon full implementation, the United Nations websites in all official languages would mirror each other in content and design. For example, daily press releases, which are searchable in English and partially in French, would be translated into Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish and special computer programmes would be written to enable them to be searchable by full text in all languages. Since the search technology is still in the early stages of development in Arabic and Chinese, those modules would have to be outsourced.

22. There are two components in this proposal. The first addresses the issue of the ongoing maintenance of the language Websites on an equal basis as of a particular date. The other component addresses the issue of redressing the imbalances between the English and other language sites. It is felt that the issue of ongoing maintenance would need to be dealt with first. Once that is resolved, efforts could be concentrated on the second component, equalizing the documentation and databases, as otherwise there would always be a constant need to "catch up".

(a) Timeframe

23. If this proposal is considered for implementation and the necessary resources are made available, planning would begin immediately. Because of the complexity and scale of the project, it would have to be implemented in phases. The equipment and staff infrastructure and training would be in place by December 2000, when all textual data in language sites would begin to be maintained at par with the English site. The next phase would address the existing textual differences among the sites and should be completed by the end of 2001. The equipment and staff infrastructure and training for the upgrading of every single page to multimedia format would be too costly to implement with the fast-evolving technology. Besides, many parts of the world still do not have the infrastructure technology for access to a full multimedia United Nations website. In addition, the development of multilingual audio-visual items in offices that do not produce them in the conventional way would indeed be an expensive undertaking that would only benefit areas where Internet technology is developed.

(b) Resource requirements

24. Implementation of this proposal is a complex and costly exercise involving staffing, training and other infrastructure requirements in all content-providing departments and offices. Most textual content providers now routinely make their material available in English, and some have added French. Few have material in Spanish, and only one or two have material in Arabic, Chinese or Russian. Content providers who are currently not using multimedia technology would have to make arrangements to boost their content-generating facilities so as to provide multimedia content in all the official languages and to translate and encode their materials for posting. Parliamentary documents and audio-visual items available in the official languages may be posted on the United Nations website in the appropriate Internet format.

25. Management and coordination duties in the Department of Public Information would increase more than fourfold, as would the costs of hardware and software infrastructure development. The estimates provided in the subsequent paragraphs of the present report are only indicative of the potential cost. It is for this reason that an extensive and structured feasibility study would need to be conducted to determine, with any degree of accuracy, the detailed resource requirements for both phases of this proposal. The cost of such a feasibility study is estimated at $1 million, for which the necessary additional appropriation would need to be made. The ongoing content-generation and maintenance requirements will constitute recurring expenditures, while the second phase of achieving parity would be a one-time investment.

26. On the basis of the current content of the English website and primarily focusing on the textual contents, which will have increased considerably by the time

implementation begins, this option is expected to incur a very high level of expenditure. However, based on the inputs received from the various content-providing departments and offices for textual materials to be made available on an ongoing basis, recurring expenditures of approximately $26 million per biennium, excluding staff resources would be required. The full-parity component, that is, making all documents currently on the website available in all official languages, would incur a one-time expenditure of approximately $560 million during the biennium 2000–2001. Samples of resource requirements, as provided by various departments and offices, are provided in annex II. Annex III provides a breakdown of the individual elements that comprise the overall figure.

2. Proposal B: concurrent equality among all official languages

27. This is a variation of the previous proposal and basically requires that an investment in the first component of that proposal — ongoing maintenance of the language websites on an equal basis — be made as soon as resources are made available, while spreading out the implementation of the second component — the redressing of the imbalances between the English and other language websites and the multilingual audio-visual content — over several bienniums.

28. Under this proposal, so long as the required resource allocations are made, all language websites would be maintained and enhanced on an equal basis once the necessary equipment and staff infrastructure are in place. As far as raising the United Nations website to a full multimedia level, the timeframe and the resource requirements would be similar to those indicated in proposal A. According to this proposal, each language website would be incrementally enhanced with a view to achieving parity with the English site. It is felt that unless the question of the increase in the differences is first addressed, it would be almost impossible to achieve parity. First, the increase in the differences would need to be ended, which can only happen if parity in production of all material is attained for all languages. Once there is no constant and exponential increase in the differences, as there is currently, those differences can eventually be bridged.

(a) Timeframe

29. If this proposal is considered for implementation and the resources are made available, planning would begin immediately. This proposal is not as complex as proposal A, but the scope and scale of the project is similar. It would be implemented in two separate phases over a longer period of time. It is envisaged that the equipment and staff infrastructure would be in place by December 2000, when all language sites would begin to be maintained at par with the English site. The next phase would address the then-existing differences between the English and other language sites and should be completed by the end of 2003, depending on improvements in technology and the level of resources allocated.

(b) Resource requirements

30. Implementation of this proposal is also a complex and costly exercise involving staffing and other infrastructure requirements in all content-providing departments and offices. Proposal B would incur the same additional recurrent costs as proposal A, namely $26 million per biennium. It is anticipated that spreading out the one-time cost of $560 million to achieve parity on retroactive material could lower that amount owing to improvements in technology and other improvements in productivity. As indicated in the previous proposal, content providers would need to make their own budgetary arrangements to boost their content-generation facilities to translate and encode their materials for posting.

31. In addition, management and coordination duties in the Department of Public Information would increase almost fourfold, as would hardware and software infrastructure development.

3. Proposal C: modular parity among languages

32. This proposal seeks to balance the need for parity and the prudent and realistic use of resources for this purpose. Efforts would be concentrated on bolstering the current set-ups so that the language sites can be resourced at the minimum levels necessary for their maintenance and incremental enhancement. The production of multilingual outputs, such as audio-visual items, could be strengthened so that those products could be offered electronically over the Internet, leading to speedier access to information materials, greater efficiency and the reaching of a wider audience.

33. Under this proposal, the United Nations website would be developed in all official languages as staff and other resources permit. A prioritized list of items to be made available in all languages has been developed (see annex III). Parity would be introduced in modules, with a number

of modules being common to each language. The audio-visual content could also be considered a module itself, as outlined below and in annex I, part II. The modular approach would be a continuous process that should eventually reduce the number of differences with improvements in the level of technology in the other official languages.

(a) Audio-visual module

34. This module aims at providing multimedia contents incrementally, in line with technological developments. Feature programmes from United Nations Radio and video clips of "UN in Action" programmes could be offered as streaming media. This would supplement the text stories and features on the planned United Nations News Service page. It would also help to reinforce public information campaigns on core issues before the United Nations and related events. Programming of United Nations Radio as well as United Nations photo coverage could be offered in high-quality formats for reuse by the media. Finally, coverage by United Nations Television could be offered as live streaming media. In all three types of activities, the question of incremental language parity would be addressed. United Nations radio programmes are produced in the official languages as original products, and "UN in Action" video programmes are produced in English and in other language versions. News coverage by United Nations Television can be captured in all official languages, with the streaming media in the floor language, and the language interpretation as supplementary audio.

(b) Timeframe

35. This would be an ongoing activity. The number of the various language modules and the timing of their implementation would be directly proportional to the additional resources that can be made available or redirected from existing operations. Again, this involves programme and budgetary provisions across all content-providing departments. The fast-changing nature of the Internet, in terms of its technology and cost, also makes it difficult to provide a detailed forecast for implementation.

36. Work is already under way to provide more audio-visual content on the Internet and existing resources have been mobilized to maximize the use of the Internet for dissemination of United Nations public information materials. These activities will progressively increase, with the expectation that all United Nations radio programming will be available as streaming media by the year 2003.

37. The question of high-quality audio-visual content for reuse by the media is already being explored. A pilot study is being undertaken on the feasibility of distributing high-fidelity United Nations radio programmes over the Internet. The results of the pilot will help map out the development of electronic distribution of those programmes to the areas of the world with advanced bandwidth and technology. The distribution of high-resolution United Nations photographs is being addressed with the implementation by the Department of Public Information of the integrated digital photo system, which should be fully operational by 2003.

38. Finally, news coverage by United Nations Television could be made available as live streaming media as the bandwidth permits and as the ancillary technical provisions are made available.

(c) Resource requirements

39. Implementation of this proposal is not as complex an exercise as in the two previous ones, but it does involve staffing and other infrastructure investments in all content-providing departments and offices. As indicated in the previous proposals, most content providers will need to make their own budgetary arrangements to boost their content-generation facilities so as to translate and encode their materials for posting, but to a lesser extent than in the previous two proposals.

40. Resource requirements for the audio-visual module are included in annex I, part II.

41. In addition, management and coordination responsibilities within the Department of Public Information would increase, as would hardware and software infrastructure development. Resource requirements for the Department are also provided in annex I, part II.

42. Annex I, part I outlines the procedure to be followed to develop the parity, should any of the proposals be decided upon.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

43. There were few precedents or guidelines to work with in establishing the United Nations website in all official languages of the Organization, because a true multilingual website of this magnitude has not yet been established. In view of the Organization's current budgetary constraints, it appears that proposals A and B would require a prohibitive level of initial investment and recurrent maintenance costs, which cannot be met within a net zero-growth budget framework.

44. Thus, proposal C, which seeks to balance the need for linguistic diversity with more realistic resource requirements, would seem to be the preferred option. The language materials in their conventional format will be included in the United Nations website to the extent possible. Modules and audio-visual components would be included in accordance with priorities established by the General Assembly. Additional activities required for ongoing maintenance arrangements for all official languages would, however, depend on available funding.

Notes

[1] See Global Reach, Global Internet Statistics (www.euromktg com/globstats), 9 February 1999.

Annex I

Part I. Development of a multilingual website

Action	*Estimated resource requirements*	*Dependency*
1. Content-providing department requests the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services to take on the additional workload of translation of English language Web pages or outsource this work.	To calculate the cost, the number of pages to be translated is multiplied by an average cost of US$ 150 per page. The translation is calculated by using the average rate of 2.5 pages per day. This does not take into account the cost or time it takes to modify graphic files that contain text.	Mandate to take on this additional workload and/or have it outsourced on a continuous basis.
2. Request from the Department of Public Information to all contributing departments/offices urging them to provide material for the United Nations website in all official languages and appropriate formats.		Depending on available resources, contributing departments/offices would secure translations through the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, in-house staff or outsourcing.
3. The Information Technology Section of the Department of Public Information submits requests to the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services for official translation of English language pages in phases as follows: (a) static pages requiring little or no updating; (b) dynamic pages requiring regular updating and databases.		Available resources and existing priorities within the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services.
4. Henceforth the Information Technology Section requires all contributors from the Secretariat to submit official language translations of their Web material. However, other United Nations system websites to which there are links from the United Nations website cannot be required to translate their material.	Available resources within the contributing departments/offices and within the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services.	
5. Translation of databases created and maintained by various offices within the Secretariat. Each database provider would have to undertake the following:	A sample cost estimate provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is as follows:	Mandate to provide databases in all official languages.

Action	*Estimated resource requirements*	*Dependency*
(a) modification of database design and development of modules that can permit information retrieval in all official languages.	Depending on the system in question, approximately $50,000 (options A and B).	
(b) official translation of data into the other languages.	Depending on the size of data sets, and scope and frequency of updating activity, approximately $100,000 to $500,000 (options A and B).	
(c) increased server capacity	$20,000 (options A, B and C).	

Part II. Ongoing development and maintenance

In order to maintain the translated websites in the official languages at par with the English language page, it is essential that a continuous cooperative arrangement be established between the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, and that the additional staff and material resources described below be allocated to the Department of Public Information. This is above and beyond any additional resource investments that may be required by content-providing departments.

Staffing (options A, B and C)

Overall development, policy, direction and management	*Each language unit (six units)*	*Audio/visual module*
Chief of section (P-5) Website Applications Specialist (P-3) Website Design Specialist (P-3) Website Design Assistant (GS-5/6) Website Technical Assistant (GS-5/6)	Website Coordinator/Editor (P-4) Website Officer (P-2/3) Website Assistant (GS-5/6)	Website Officer (P-2/3) to oversee audio-visual encoding and manage links in the audio-visual pages.

Material and services

1. Office space, high-speed computers and furniture;
2. Dedicated Web server for each of the language sites, media server (in house or through hosting facilities with strict United Nations control on media contents);
3. Additional bandwidth costs for expected increased usage;
4. Internet-related software, namely, a search engine capable of processing search requests in each language; linguistic resources, such as dictionaries, glossaries;
5. Hardware/software to facilitate integration of digital production, multiple encoding and automated dissemination of high-end audio/visual contents for reuse by the media;
6. Training and development.

Annex II

Sample resource requirements for option A and B, as provided by content-providing departments[a]

Department/Office	*Recurrent maintenance (United States dollars)*[b]	*Parity investment (United States dollars)*[b]	*Encoding*	*Remarks*
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	1. Project management (100,000) 2. Engage five full-time translators (500,000 per year)	1. Convert gopher to HTML (50,000) 2. To provide direct links to ODS (50,000) 3. Translate 3,000 pages (2,250,000) 4. Design and HTML templates (50,000) 5. Software (50,000) 6. Modify database design (50,000?) 7. Translate major data sets (50,000?)	Encoding costs vary according to complexity of documents.	
Department of Peacekeeping Operations	Annual update of 50 pages (10,400)	500 pages in five languages (104,000)		
Department of Political Affairs				Translation recommended.
Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services				All material which originates in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services could be posted in all six official languages within existing resources.
Office of Human Resources Management				Translation not recommended.
Office of Internal Oversight Services	Annual	20 reports in six languages (550,000)		Translation

Department/Office	*Recurrent maintenance (United States dollars)*[a]	*Parity investment (United States dollars)*[a]	*Encoding*	*Remarks*
Office of Legal Affairs				
Treaty Section		700,000 pages translated into four languages (420,000,000)		To post all material would require:
Multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General	One website officer for six months	1,000 pages x five languages x $150		1. Personnel fluent in the languages;
				2. Web experts;
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea				3. French: one full-time staff member for one and a half months;
				Spanish: one full-time staff member for three months;
				Russian: one full-time staff member for three months;
				Arabic: one full-time staff member for five months;
				Chinese: one full-time staff member for six to seven months.
Department of Public Information	Requirements for, coordination, management, maintenance and development are provided in annex I, parts II and III			

[a] Expenditure under option C will depend on the number of modules to be covered.

[b] Figures determined by the respective offices.

Annex III

Prioritized list for translation into one language with estimated cost[a] (applicable to option C — total cost would depend on how many documents are translated)

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
A. Static pages of HTML or portable document format (PDF) documents that require little or no updating			
About the United Nations			
United Nations history			
History of the United Nations	Department of Public Information	1 document of one page	150
Milestones	Department of Public Information	1 document of about 10 pages	1 500
Major achievements	Department of Public Information	1 document of about 5 pages	750
Fiftieth anniversary	Department of Public Information	11 documents averaging two pages	3 300
		195 documents in the United Nations gopher	146 250
Secretaries-General of the United Nations	Department of Public Information	15 documents averaging two pages each and search facility for press releases issued with the symbol SG/SM.	4 500
United Nations on-line tour			
United Nations Headquarters — New York		1 document of one page	150
United Nations Office at Geneva	*Link* to United Nations Office at Geneva	The UNOG Website is available in English and French	
United Nations Reform	Executive Office of the Secretary-General/Department of Public Information	198 documents averaging two pages each	59 400
General information			
Information guide for services to the public	Department of Public Information	1 document of about 10 pages	1 500
Media accreditation	Department of Public Information	1 document of about two pages	300
United Nations/non-governmental organization link	Department of Public Information	14 documents averaging two pages each	4 200
United Nations International School	*Link* to United Nations Information Service	The UNIS Website is available in English only	
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund	86 documents averaging two pages each	25 800
Procurement Division	OCCS, Procurement Division	53 documents averaging two pages each	15 900
UN Chronicle	Department of Public Information	19 documents averaging two pages each	5 700

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
United Nations Staff College Project	*Link* to International Labour Organization and ILO Training Centre	This Website is available in English	
Association of Former International Civil Servants	AFICS	50 documents averaging two pages each	15 000
Audio-visual			
Radio	Department of Public Information	35 documents averaging two pages each	10 500
Television	Department of Public Information	5 documents averaging two pages each	1 500
Photo	Department of Public Information	24 documents averaging seven pages each	25 200
United Nations Sound and Image Archives	Department of Public Information	6 documents averaging two pages each	1 800
United Nations publications and sales			
The United Nations in our daily lives and others	Department of Public Information	29 documents averaging two pages each	2 900
United Nations documents			
Research Guide	Department of Public Information	75 documents averaging three pages each	33 750
Secretary-General of the United Nations	Department of Public Information	63 documents averaging three pages each	28 350
General Assembly	Department of Public Information/Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services	211 documents (available from optical disk system)	
Economic and Social Council	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Approximately 2,000 documents in the United Nations gopher (some of these available on the optical disk system)	
United Nations around the world			
World map of United Nations Websites	Department of Public Information	1 document of one page	150
Departments, offices, programmes and regional commissions[c]		1 document of approximately 15 pages	2 250
Archives	Office of Central Support Services	39 documents averaging two pages each	11 700
Disarmament and arms reduction		(already included under Peace and Security section below)	
Department of Humanitarian Affairs	Department of Humanitarian Affairs	71 documents averaging two pages each	21 300
Dag Hammarskjöld Library		(already included in section B below)	

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
Department of Political Affairs	Department of Political Affairs	479 documents averaging two pages each	143 700
Department of Peacekeeping Operations (peacekeeping operations)	Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Public Information	264 documents averaging two pages each	79 200
Department of Peacekeeping Operations	Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Public Information	144 documents averaging two pages each	43 200
Economic Commission for Africa	Economic Commission for Africa	1,987 documents averaging two pages each	596 100
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	783 documents averaging two pages each	234 900
	International Civil Service Commission	901 documents averaging two pages each	270 300
International Civil Service Commission	Department of Humanitarian Affairs	(already included in section B below)	
Landmines			
Law of the Sea	Office of Legal Affairs/Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea	(already included below, under International Law)	
Office of Human Resources Management	Office of Human Resources Management	182 documents averaging two pages each	54 600
Office of Internal Oversight Services	Office of Internal Oversight Services	85 documents averaging two pages each	25 500
Procurement and Transportation	Office of Central Support Services	54 documents averaging two pages each	16 200
Regional Commissions New York Office	Regional Commissions New York Office	9 documents averaging two pages each	2 700
Treasury	Department of Management (Treasury)	1 document	150
Treaties	Office of Legal Affairs	394 documents averaging two pages each	118 200
United Nations Information Centres	Department of Public Information	5 documents averaging two pages each	1 500
United Nations Postal Administration	OCCS/United Nations Postal Administration	48 documents averaging two pages each	14 400
United Nations Special Commission	United Nations Special Commission	(included under Peace and Security section below)	
United Nations Statistical Division	Department of Economic and Social Affairs/United Nations Statistical Division	2 273 documents averaging two pages each	681 900
Permanent missions in Geneva	*Link* to United Nations Office at Geneva	The United Nations Office at Geneva Website is available in English and French	
United Nations information centres	Department of Public Information	117 documents averaging two pages each	35 100
Depository libraries	Department of Public Information	153 documents averaging two pages each	22 950

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost*[b] *(United States dollars)*
United Nations Member States			
Information on the Year 2000 Problem	Department of Public Information/Department of Management	35 documents; 39 pages	5 850
Peace and security			
United Nations peacekeeping	Department of Public Information/Department of Peacekeeping Operations	701 documents averaging two pages each	210 300
50 years of United Nations peacekeeping	Department of Public Information/Department of Peacekeeping Operations	138 documents averaging two pages each	41 400
Disarmament	Department of Disarmament Affairs	225 documents averaging two pages each	67 500
United Nations Special Commission	United Nations Special Commission	57 documents averaging two pages each	17 100
Electoral assistance	Department of Political Affairs	67 documents averaging two pages each	20 100
Question of Palestine	Department of Political Affairs	301 documents averaging two pages each	90 300
Economic and social development (Department of Economic and Social Affairs Website databases not included[c])	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	3,000 pages	450 000
International law			
International Court of Justice	*Link* to International Court of Justice	The International Court of Justice Website is available in English	
		401 documents averaging two pages each	120 300
International Criminal Court	Office of Legal Affairs	26 documents averaging two pages each	7 800
Codification, development and promotion of international law	Office of Legal Affairs	247 documents averaging two pages each	74 100
International Law Commission OLA	Office of Legal Affairs	594 documents averaging two pages each	178 200
Law of the Sea	Office of Legal Affairs	2,596 documents averaging two pages each	778 800
International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia	International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia		
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	*Link* to International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda Website is available in English	
Verdicts on the crime of genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda	Department of Public Information	3 documents averaging two pages each	900

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
Human rights			
Fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Department of Public Information	38 documents averaging two pages each	11 400
International Civilian Mission in Haiti	International Civilian Mission in Haiti	260 documents averaging two pages each	78 000
Civil society business	Executive Office of the Secretary-General/Department of Public Information	60 documents averaging two pages each	18 000
B. Dynamic pages that require regular updating and databases (option C)			
UN news			
Statement to the Press	Department of Public Information	1 daily document of about three pages each	450/day
Journal of the United Nations	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services	1 daily document of about six pages each	900/day
Noon briefing highlights	Department of Public Information	1 daily document of about five pages each	750/day
Spokesman for the Secretary-General	Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General	36 documents averaging two pages each	10 800
Daily highlights	Department of Public Information	1 daily document of about four pages each	2 400/day
United Nations press releases	Department of Public Information	6 daily documents, on average four pages	14 400/day
Fact sheets and newsletters	Department of Public Information	12 documents averaging three pages each	27 000
United Nations documents			
Daily list of documents issued at Headquarters	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services	1 daily document of about two pages each	300/day
Documents alert	Department of Public Information	(part of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library section below, under General Information)	
United Nations conference documents	Department of Public Information	81 documents averaging two pages each	24 300
Conferences and events			
Calendar of conferences and meetings	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services	111 documents averaging two pages each	33 000
Calendar of special events at Headquarters	Department of Public Information	16 documents averaging two pages each	4 800
General information			
Dag Hammarskjöld Library	Department of Public Information	225 documents averaging two pages each	67 500
CyberSchoolBus	Department of Public Information	Portions available in all languages	60 000
Employment opportunities	Office of Human Resources Management	(already listed above under United Nations Around the World)	

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
General telephone directory	Department of Public Information	2 documents averaging two pages each	600
Peace and security			
Special Representatives of the Secretary-General		(part of the section on the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General listed above, under United Nations News)	
Humanitarian affairs			
Office of the Iraq Programme	Office of the Iraq Programme	(already listed above under United Nations Around the World)	
Member States of the United Nations			
E-mail addresses of permanent missions in New York	Department of Public Information/United Nations Development Programme	*Link* to United Nations Development Programme Website	
Websites of permanent missions in New York	Department of Public Information/United Nations Development Programme	*Link* to United Nations Development Programme Website	
Audio-visual			
Radio	Department of Public Information	1 document averaging two pages	300/daily
Photos	Department of Public Information	51 documents averaging 10 pages each	76 500
Special events	Department of Public Information	34 documents averaging two pages each	10 200
News ticker with daily highlights	Department of Public Information	1 daily document averaging one page	150/daily
United Nations publications and sales			
United Nations sales publications	Department of Public Information	934 documents averaging two pages each (less 29 documents already included on p. 1 of this annex United Nations sales publications)	271 500
United Nations Bookshop	Department of Public Information	(already listed above under United Nations Around the World)	
United Nations stamps	Office of Central Support Services/United Nations Postal Administration	included in United Nations sales publications above	
UN Chronicle	Department of Public Information	included in United Nations sales publications above	
Africa Recovery	Department of Public Information	256 files (including back issues)	38 400
Image and Reality	Department of Public Information	52 files averaging two pages	15 600

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
C. Databases[a]			
Department of Economic and Social Affairs Website databases[c]	Department of Economic and Social Affairs		170 000–570 000
Audio-visual	Department of Public Information		
UN in Action video catalogue		Approximately 100 records; one page each	15 000
Security Council meetings on film and video			
General Assembly meetings on film and video			
Humanitarian affairs			
Landmines	Department of Humanitarian Affairs	546 documents averaging two pages each	163 800
REFWORLD (refugees)	*Link* to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	The Website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is available in English, German, Japanese and Korean.	
ReliefWeb	*Link* to ReliefWeb	The ReliefWeb site is available in English only.	
Peacekeeping training courses database	Department of Peacekeeping Operations	430 documents averaging two pages each	129 000
Database of peacekeeping training and initiatives in Africa			
Statistics and indicators			
Monthly Bulletin of Statistics ON-line	United Nations Statistical Division	This would require translation of the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* and perhaps software and programming enhancements	To be determined
Social indicators	United Nations Statistical Division	14 documents averaging 10 pages each	21 000
Treaties			
International treaties	Office of Legal Affairs Treaty Section	The collection currently contains over 30,000 treaties and related subsequent actions published in hard copy in over 1,550 volumes, running over 700,000 pages. *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General* is a publication that provides information on the status of 486 major multilateral instruments deposited with the Secretary-General.	Estimated cost to be determined

Button on the top page of United Nations Website	*Information provider*	*Number of HTML/PDF documents/average number of pages per document*	*Estimated cost[b] (United States dollars)*
United Nations document symbols: Guide	Department of Public Information	already included above under United Nations Around the World	
UN Info Quest (UN-I-QUE) 1946 onwards			
United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL)	Department of Political Affairs		
	Link to the Department of Political Affairs Domino server	Lotus Notes software is used	Cost to be determined
NGO directories			
Non-governmental organizations associated with the Department of Public Information	Department of Public Information	1,563 documents averaging three pages each	703 350
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council	*Link* to the United Nations Office at Geneva	*http://www.unog.ch/ess_mission_services/opzuvbtrsvq/ngo/* ngosearch.asp	

[*] For cost estimate, see annex I, part I, item 5.

D. Recurring expenditures per biennium

From annex III, section B (Dynamic pages)	$3 554 400 x 5 languages	$17 772 000
From annex III, section C (Databases)	$1 432 150 x 5 languages	$7 160 750
Projected overall hardware/software-related costs		$1 000 000
Total		**$25 932 750**

E. Total parity investment

From annex III, section A	$8 688 950 x 5 languages	$43 444 750
From annex III, section C (Treaties)	700,000 pages x 4 languages	$420 000 000
Typing in languages cost for 860,000 pages	860,000 x 5 languages x average $12	$51 600 000
Recurring expenditure for biennium		$25 932 750
Projected undetermined costs for feasibility study, planning and project management		$5 000 000
Projected requirement for hardware/software infrastructure installation and maintenance		$14 000 000
Total		**$559 977 500**

[a] Applicable to option C; total cost would depend on how many documents are translated.

[b] Estimated cost of translation calculated at US$ 150 per page. All figures provided are in United States dollars.

[c] These Websites are prepared and maintained by individual offices, departments, regional commissions or agencies. Translation of these pages could be prepared and furnished by these offices using their budgets or the Department of Public Information, through chargebacks, would be responsible for providing the translations. In either case, the translations would be done by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services or through outsourcing.